

Certificate of Proficiency in Early Childhood Development  
Technical Certificate in Early Childhood Education  
Ozarka College

Arkansas Department of Higher Education  
Existing Program Review External Reviewer Report

By Holly Bagby  
Out of State Reviewer

2012-2013 Academic Year  
Academic Program Review  
External Reviewers Report

I. Review of Program Goals, Objectives, and Activities

- A. The intended educational goals for the program are appropriate and assessed. The goals of maintaining a proper learning environment and understanding stages of young child development are met thru coursework and area early childhood classrooms. Relating to the child's family and effective program operation are also addressed in the early childhood environment. Students meet these goals thru the day to day operation of a child care facility and by completion of the CDA Certificate.
- B. The faculty and students are accomplishing the programs goals and objectives by working, observing, and practicing in a liscenced childcare facility. As well as, completion of the required coursework enabling them to earn a CDA.
- C. The program meets the market demand by having the Certificate of Proficiency for those that want to enter the workforce immediately following completion of the CDA. The student that wants to complete a more advanced study can continue on and obtain the Technical Certificate which is designed to lead to a four year degree.
- D. There is not a large demand for the Certificate of Proficiency or the Technical Certificate, but to service the area Head Starts the program is needed. Head Start requires a minimum of an AA/AAS degree to obtain a job. Other child care facilities want their workers to obtain a CDA, thus the program is needed.
- E. Past enrollment and program completion rates justify the required resources to continue both the Certificate of Proficiency and the Technical Certificate. The national trend regarding Head Start and state funded programs will require students to work toward a bachelor degree, thus the two year program is very much needed to keep up with this growing trend.

II. Review of Program Curriculum

- A. The way the program is designed, it allows the Certificate of Proficiency student to enter the workforce immediately upon completion; and it allows the Technical Certificate student to work toward a more advance degree by completing their course of study at a four year institution. The course work for the Certificate of

Proficiency flows directly into the Technical Certificate, allowing the student to advance at their own rate and desired level of education.

- B. The program has assessed the community's needs as well as national childcare trends and is meeting those needs, while continuing to monitor and assess to keep with current industry standards.
- C. Students receive guidance to prepare for the CDA as their exit exam with the Certificate of Proficiency. The Technical Certificate student meets exit criteria as set by the college.
- D. The institution practices developmentally appropriate practice by maintaining a high quality childcare center on campus and coursework is taught by well trained, qualified faculty.
- E. The students spend time at quality licensed childcare centers observing and practicing what they have learned thru coursework. They are surrounded by leaders in the field of early childhood education.
- F. The Technical Certificate provides interdisciplinary course work in math, English, communication, and technology to support elements of other areas of business and industry.
- G. The curriculum supports cultural diversity, especially in the child care settings.

### III. Review of Academic Support

- A. The program provides academic advising, tutoring, student support services, and library assistance.
- B. The Technical Certificate shows evidence of continued enrollment and completion of coursework for graduation requirements.

### IV. Review of Program Faculty

- A. The program faculty has the required credentials, certificates, and appropriate academic coursework.
- B. The faculty orientation and faculty evaluation processes are appropriate with current trends and other colleges.
- C. The faculty workload is keeping with best practices and current college trends.

V. Review of Program Resources

- A. The college supports the early childhood program with appropriate early childhood faculty, a childcare facility, student services, a library, professional development, and access to all college resources.

VI. Review of Program Effectiveness

- A. The strengths of the program are that the Certificate of Proficiency flows directly into the Technical Certificate so that the student is taking only course work that is needed for both certificates. Another strength is that the college has an onsite licensed childcare facility for the students to practice their skills in a developmentally appropriate environment.
- B. The program could employ a fulltime faculty member to ensure that the program operates efficiently. The program also could offer web classes in the early childhood curriculum area to provide students that work easier access to courses so that more potential students can obtain the Certificate of Proficiency and the Technical Certificate while working. This will be needed in the next 2 to 5 years as Head Start requirements increase.
- C. The program needs to look at the development of additional classes to meet the needs of connecting the two year degree with four institutions, allowing for easy transfer into teaching certificate programs. Early Education is a growing field and more certified bachelor degreed teachers will be needed. The addition of a birth to three option and early childhood special education option to the current coursework could also be added to allow for various market trends.

VII. Review of Instruction by Distance Technology

- A. The program offers distance learning with nine credit hours offered in the Technical Certificate program and those courses are delivered using best practices.
- B. The institution has appropriate procedures to ensure security of personal information.
- C. The technology support services are appropriate for the students enrolled. The faculty utilizes technology teaching with various applications of technology.
- D. The student/faculty ratio is very low (10 to1) and appropriate, and the course load is ideal in keeping with best practices.
- E. The policy on intellectual property is in accordance with best practices.

VIII. Review of Program Research and Service

- A. The intended research and creative outcomes for each program are appropriate, assessed, and results utilized.
- B. The intended outreach/service/ entrepreneurial outcomes for each program's initiatives are appropriately assessed and results utilized.

IX. Local Reviewer Comments

- A. The program is currently meeting the needs of the service area by providing CDA's and AA/AAS degrees to area childcare and Head Start programs.
- B. The program is currently meeting the needs of the market and students in the service area.

X. Report Summary

- A. Because of the national trend, recommendations from NAEYC and President Obama's push for certified and qualified early childhood professionals, as well as the need to provide quality care for birth to five year olds; there will be a continued need for programs that train early childhood professionals. The region that Ozarka serves is heavily supported with Head Starts and private child care centers. Within the next five years enrollment numbers should increase based upon the requirements of Head Start, and the fact the state is pushing for well-trained early childhood educators to care for our Nation's young people.
- B. The need of quality training institutions is essential to providing developmentally appropriate care for young children. The state review process helps to ensure that institutions like Ozarka continue to provide quality instruction and use best practices while educating the workforce that cares for our little ones.